

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 7949

STADIS////////////////////////////////

FOR EUR/ARMITAGE FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SP

SUBJECT: RADIO LIBERTY LEASE IN SPAIN

REF: STATE 256827

1. WE HAVE DONE SOME EXPLORATION HERE WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTRY (PERINAT, THE DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR NORTH AMERICAN AFFAIRS) AND THE RADIO LIBERTY MAN ON THE SCENE, GEORGE DENNIS. AS YOU SURMISE, THE CURRENT UNCERTAINTIES COMPLICATE THE RL LEASE QUESTION.

2. PERINAT, AFTER SOME INTERNAL CONSULTATIONS, HAS COME BACK TO US TODAY AND SAID THAT - LIKE THE BASE AGREEMENT - NOTHING MUCH CAN BE DONE UNTIL THERE IS A NEW GOVT, WHICH WAITS UPON THE EBB AND FLOW OF FRANCO'S ILLNESS. ANY NEW GOVT WOULD, IN THE NATURE OF THINGS, BE PRO-AMERICAN AND LIKELY TO LOOK WITH SYMPATHY UPON THE BASIC PROPOSITION OF CONTINUING RADIO LIBERTY "UNDER NEW CONDITIONS". HE RECOGNIZED THE CLOCK WAS RUNNING, BUT DECEMBER MIGHT BE TOO EARLY AND SUGGESTED WE MIGHT WISH TO DISUADE THE RL/BIB PEOPLE FROM COMING OUT THAT SOON. AT ALL EVENTS, THERE WAS STILL TIME BEFORE MARCH, AND IF NEGOTIATIONS DRAGGED OUT, SOMETHING PROVISIONAL COULD BE DONE TO KEEP RADIO LIBERTY OPERATING UNTIL A
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NEW AGREEMENT WAS REACHED.

3. GEORGE DENNIS EXPRESSES THE UNDERSTANDABLE
IMPATIENCE OF THE RL AND BIB PEOPLE TO GET THINGS UNDER
WAY. HE HAD AN INQUIRY FROM RL'S MICKELSON AS TO WHETHER HE
SHOULD PLAN TO COME OUT HERE IN EARLY DECEMBER SINCE
WALTER ROBERTS OF BIB IS APPARENTLY PLANNING A TRIP AT THE
SAME TIME. WE TOLD DENNIS TO TELL MICKELSON THAT HE COULD
MAKE TENTATIVE PLANS BUT HE AND ROBERTS SHOULD KEEP THEM
FLEXIBLE. AFTER WHAT PERINAT HAS SAID, I AM NOW INCLINED
TO PUSH FOR JANUARY DISCUSSIONS.

4. LIKE YOU, I REMAIN OF THE BELIEF THAT WE SHOULD
WORK BEHIND THE SCENES, LEAVING THOSE WHO RUN RL TO
DO THE ACTUAL NEGOTIATION WITH THE FOREIGN AND THE
INFORMATION MINISTRIES. I GATHER THERE MAY BE SOME ARGUMENT
BETWEEN BIB AND RL AS TO WHO SHOULD DO THE NEGOTIATING.
WHILE WE CAN'T MAKE THIS DECISION, THE SPANISH ARE USED TO
DEALING WITH RL.
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